(vi) Micro-finance Development Fund has been set up in NABARD with a corpus of Rs. 100 crores for scaling up the Self Help Group Linkage Programme and supporting other credit delivery models.

(vii) The scheme of micro credit through Self Help Groups is expected to cover 70 lakh families in the current year. The target for 2002-03 is raised to 1.25 lakh families.

(viii) Watershed Development Fund has been set up with a corpus of Rs. 200 crores with contribution of Rs. 100 each from NABARD and Government of India.

UNDRC assistance for natural disasters

1328. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the article captioned "blame it on the forces of nature", by Sunder K. Datta Ray, which appeared in the Business Standard, New Delhi dated 28th July, 2001;

(b) if so, whether India heads the list of countries, alongwith China, Hongkong and Phillipines, which are vulnerable to natural disasters;

(c) whether India has ever made a request to the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordination (UNDRC) for assistance; and

(d) if not, whether Government are thinking to make such a request now, looking to the present flood disaster in Orissa, a calamity-prone State in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) India, due to its geographical location and climate is vulnerable to various natural disasters like flood, cyclone, drought, earthquake, landslides, hailstorm and avalanches.

(c) and (d) No, Sir.

Drought relief to H.P.

1329. SHRIMATI CHANDRESH KUMARI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount provided to Himachal Pradesh as drought relief during the last three financial years;